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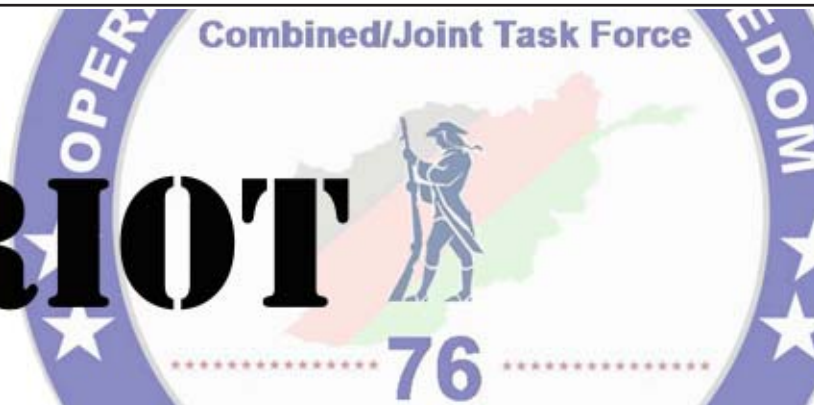
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THE PATRIOT



Vol 1, Issue 1

A CJTF-76 Publication

May 15, 2005

82nd troops tour new mission

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen
CTF Thunder Public Affairs

ZAMBAR – Led by a Marine captain who spent the last six months leading his company of Marines through Khost province, Soldiers from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment got a good look at the region they will be patrolling for the next year April 28.

Capt. Ken Barr, commander of Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, took the White Devils to three villages in the northern part of Khost province, including one where a patrol he was leading was attacked in January.

The first stop was Yaqobi, the Sabari district headquarters where about 20 elders from around the district had gathered. There, Barr bid the elders farewell and introduced Capt. Edward Hollis, commander of Co. A, 2-504 PIR, as his replacement in the district.

Following that, Barr led the patrol to Zambar where a patrol he was leading was attacked in the middle of the night earlier this year with machine guns and rocket propelled grenades. There, Barr also introduced Hollis to a couple of vil-

lage elders.

“Zambar district is kind of a hotter area so I wanted, in the daylight, to get a good recon of the area,” Hollis said. “If there are bad guys out there, we’re here to root them out, so I wasn’t really too worried about [the attack].”

The purpose of the mission, Hollis said, was to let the Soldiers see the village in the daylight. Afterwards, he said it was good to arrive at Forward Operating Base Salerno about two weeks earlier.

Many of them spent the majority of the day fending off hordes of Afghan kids who swarmed the Americans during every stop in the efforts to get an up close and personal look or, perhaps, to get a pen or some candy.

“I felt kind of sorry for the kids, but I guess there’s not much we can do about that,” said Pfc. James Robinson, an M240B assistant gunner with Co. A, 2-504 PIR.

The 23-year-old, Bartlesville, Okla., native made his first trip outside the wire on his first deployment since joining the Army. Robinson said he was nervous at times, but in the end he thought the mission went smoothly.

“It went good because nobody got hurt, we didn’t take any fire, we



Cpl. Robert Casey, a team leader for Company A, 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, lets an Afghan boy look through the scope of his M4 carbine April 28 in Zambar, Afghanistan.

got back here safe, and we’re ready to go back out again and do what we got to do,” he said.

Robinson said this mission was a good learning experience and he thinks it will be useful when preparing for future missions.

“Knowing what I experienced today, I’ll be more prepared in the

upcoming mission that we have out there,” he said.

Since arriving at FOB Salerno about two weeks earlier, Hollis said he’s worked quite a bit with the Marines. Although he never worked with Marines before, if that’s the

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Eikenberry takes command of CFC-A

Story by Pfc. Vincent Fusco
20th Public Affairs Det.

CAMP EGGERS—Army Lt. Gen. Karl W. Eikenberry assumed command of Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan as a steady rain fell here May 3.

He succeeds Army Lt. Gen. David W. Barno, who will be the Army’s assistant chief of staff for installation

management.

“Rain is good luck,” said Army Gen. John Abizaid, commander of U.S. Central Command, referring to an earlier statement made by Afghan President Hamid Karzai at a breakfast meeting with the generals.

The wet weather is welcome in a country suffering from more than six years of drought.

Abizaid presided over

the passing of the colors, the traditional ritual that passes command from the outgoing commander to the new one. A formation led by CFC-A Command Sgt. Maj. Cynthia Pritchett represented CFC-A elements:

Combined Joint Task Force-76, the Office of Military Cooperation Afghanistan, Task Force Phoenix and Coalition allies.

Barno was presented

with NATO’s Meritorious Service Medal. He also received an antique rifle from Afghan Defense Minister Abdurahim Wardak. The rifle signifies courage and bravery in Afghanistan.

“General Barno has achieved great victories in the war against terrorism,” Wardak said.

Eikenberry, arriving in Afghanistan for his second tour, served for a year as the

U.S. security coordinator and chief of the Office of Military Cooperation in the Afghan capital of Kabul, and worked to set up the Afghan National Army before leaving the country in September 2003. Eikenberry said it was an honor to return to Afghanistan and pledged to continue CFC-A’s mission.

“I give a pledge to this

See CFC-A Page 3

Coalition Voices / Opinion

Defending freedom

A Soldier's Essay

By Pfc. Timothy Beckwith

The word defense is often used in a manner that would suggest retaliation against an offensive action. The United States struck out in retaliation following the Sept. 11 attacks. Some individuals currently question why Soldiers are still engaged in combat zones. They believe we aren't in a defensive posture any longer but have assumed an aggressive stance. These individuals have the freedom to sustain these views courtesy of American Soldiers who are obligated (and most are honored) to defend this freedom at any cost. One must ask, "is this freedom we hold so dear even worth defending?"

Freedom is not just a word. It is a living, growing and changing social structure that is constantly being built up, broken down and

altered by many contributing factors. The music we listen to, the religion we practice and daily activities we conduct are all reflections and results of our freedom. It isn't even necessary for those of us who defend freedom to agree with everyone who wishes to exercise theirs. This is constantly ebbing and flowing as the very freedom that is created allows people to oppose those who create it.

As defenders of freedom, we are not only providing a platform for those supporting us, but also for those who oppose what we do. This seems ironic; and many would ask why we support those who oppose us? We do this because we realize the advantages of freedom. We realize the importance of allowing people in opposition to be heard, because they may convey ideas that need to be considered before action is

taken. Our system of freedom is designed to run on checks and balances and these sometimes conflicting views allow this balance to occur.

Imagine if there was no conservative party. Imagine if there were no liberal party. Imagine if there were only a House or only a Senate. This would disrupt the balance of power causing one group to possibly make decisions without having the majority of support. This would in turn cause turmoil and possibly lead to rebellion. Our country was formed by a rebellion, yet the creation of democracy is an effort to prevent regression from freedom. Our forefathers had the incredible insight to believe the more freedom people are granted, the more productive they are, the more happy they are, the more creative they are and the more

they can accomplish, but they also realized taking away even diminutive freedoms could cause devastating repercussions.

Defending freedom is required for the survival of our Nation, for the very structure of our democracy is founded on the principles of freedom. Our country is accustomed to living free, yet we attained it merely a few hundred years ago. Is liberty a cause to defend or an excuse to attack? When considering defending freedom, one must ponder the value of their own personal liberties and what lengths might be necessary to preserve them. Is freedom worth defending? Ask our brave Soldiers who wish no more harm on their adversary than necessary to defend our freedom, and who would risk their life so that you may live in the comfort of your freedom.

Chaplain's Corner



By
Lt. Col.
Thomas
Killgore

TF Sword
Chaplain

Pylons, Blood and God.

I was lucky enough to grow up in the great state of South Carolina. Every summer my father rented a beach house at Pawley's Island. The first summer we were there my father took me to the beach. He told me I could swim between the pylons but not next to them.

That day I went down to the beach and into that great South Carolina surf. Calling my name were the forbidden pylons. I swam over to the pylons and no sooner had I arrived when a wave slammed me into the pylon cutting my head. Instinctively, I grabbed onto a pylon. What I didn't know was that barnacles grow on pylons. Quickly the flesh on my arms and legs were being cut by every wave surge.

(Did I mention that the first Jaws movie was released that summer?)

Back and forth I went. Soon my blood was spilling into the ocean. I knew a great white would soon consume my 11-year-old body. I had to do something. I felt like an idiot for disobeying my dad. I had to choose: hold onto the pain or call out to my father.

You may be in a similar situation in life. Holding onto a memory or situation that is tearing you apart. It may even be of your own making. The good news is that you can do something about it. You can talk to your Chaplain or Chaplain Assistant; or the BASOPS Chaplain. All are ready to serve. They provide numerous activities or services that can meet your needs.

I let go and jumped into my father's arms. So can you.

Heavenly father, give us the strength to let go of those things that tear us apart and leap into your waiting arms. Amen.

Another point of view Kids care too

Story by
Monica Ollander
Special to American
Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, April 28, 2005 - Two superheroes came to the Pentagon today to show that they care about the military. Well, America's kids care too.

American children care about the military members serving in Iraq and other places of the world because children know the troops protect all of us. Kids in America want the military to be safe and happy.

For instance, the nation's Girl Scouts show they care when cookie-selling time comes around. Many Girl Scout troops donate cookies for soldiers to enjoy, and other troops use some money they earn selling cookies to support the United Service Organizations.



Here at the Pentagon, dozens of kids — many with military moms or dads — lined up to meet two well-known superheroes, Spiderman and Captain America, who came here to show they care about the troops.

Today at the Pentagon, I met a girl named Kaitlin Lee, who's 11. She said the military is like our superheroes, and it's important "to help out and show them that we care."

Kaitlin's little brother, Josh, who's 6, even said it's "cool, really cool" that the superheroes were supporting the troops.

My own 6-year-old sister, Lexi, understands

how important the troops are to our country. "Without the soldiers, the bad guys could just come into our homes and hurt us," she said.

It just shows America loves the good guys — both action heroes and those serving in Iraq and all around the world.

(Monica Ollander is the 12-year-old daughter of American Forces Press Service writer Kathleen Rhem. Monica and her other sister, Maggie, spent the day in the Pentagon with their mother for the national Take Your Daughters and Sons to Work Day.)

Across Afghanistan / CJTF - 76

CFC-A TOA \$82B approved for Afghanistan, Iraq



(From left to right) Barno, Abizaid, Eikenberry. (Photo by Spc. John Chriswell)

CFC-A from Page 1

command to follow in General Barno's footsteps," he said. "We will continue to work together, build security forces and support the rebuilding of Afghanistan."

As Barno had done for the Afghan presidential election last year, Eikenberry said he will work with the Afghan government to support the upcoming parliamentary elections.

"Our mission will continue in the same direction, ... working with the United Nations, Coalition forces, and most importantly, the Afghan government," Eikenberry said.

CFC-A is made up of more than 18,000 troops — 16,700 U.S. service members and 1,600 personnel from 22 allied nations who conduct full-spectrum operations, from combat to humanitarian activities.

"We will continue to prosecute the war against terror in partnership with the Islamic government of Afghanistan and be relentless as we move forward," said Eikenberry. "So much has been accomplished, and so much has to be done."

Eikenberry's last assignment was as the director of strategic planning and policy for U.S. Pacific Command.

Story by Liz Sidoti
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) - The House easily approved another \$82 billion for Iraq and Afghanistan on May 5, a measure that includes sweeping immigration reforms and boosts the total spent on fighting terrorism since 2001 to beyond \$300 billion. The vote was 368-58, with one lawmaker voting present. The Senate is to vote on the measure next week when it returns from a weeklong recess, and approval is expected.

The bulk of the money - \$75.9 billion - is slated for military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, while \$4.2 billion goes to foreign aid and other international relations programs worldwide.

The bill also includes uniform requirements for driver's licenses across states, toughens asylum laws, authorizes the completion of a fence across the California-Mexican border and provides money to hire more border security agents.

Both the Republican-controlled House and Senate had promised to "scrub" President Bush's request to cut spending for items that did not represent emergency spending needs. But the bill carries the same overall price tag that Bush proposed in February, and he gets most of what he sought.

However, the bill also provides roughly \$1 billion more than the president had requested for defense and about \$1.5 billion less than he wanted for international relations programs, reflecting a desire by lawmakers to give the Pentagon what it needs while holding the line on State Depart-

ment spending.

"We did our very best to keep the package clean, and by and large we were successful at that," said Rep. Jerry Lewis, R-Calif., chairman of the House Appropriations Committee.

Rep. Tom Cole, R-Okla., said the bill provides important money for troops overseas. "We owe them our full support in the battles they wage in the cause of liberty," he said.

Democrats roundly criticized the Republican leadership for including the immigration reforms in a bill meant to cover the cost of war. They also assailed the administration's Iraq policies and railed against what they called a lack of oversight by Congress of money already given to the Republican administration for the two wars and reconstruction.

"The president's rationale for the invasion was discredited long ago. Iraq is still not safe," House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., said. "Providing this money alone is not enough. A way out must be provided as well."

Rep. David Obey of Wisconsin, the top Democrat on the Appropriations Committee, said the bill fails to include checks and balances of U.S. funds flowing into Iraq, despite reports of financial mismanagement of money that Congress already has approved.

"We have virtually been begging on bended knee to get this Congress to establish a committee to investigate this problem," he said.

Hitting on immigration reforms in the bill, Rep. Louise McIntosh Slaughter, D-N.Y., claimed that House GOP leaders "shoved this extreme measure down our

throats."

"Our brave men and women are being used as a tool" for the "underhanded attempt to create a national ID card," she said.

The legislation is the fifth such emergency spending package Congress has taken up since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. It pushes the costs of the two conflicts and other efforts to fight terrorism worldwide over four years beyond \$300 billion.

The bill includes a nearly tenfold increase in the one-time benefit for survivors of troops killed in combat zones - from \$12,000 to \$100,000. The increase would apply retroactively to families of troops killed in Iraq and Afghanistan beginning on Oct. 7, 2001.

On the foreign affairs side, the measure provides \$592 million for a sprawling embassy in Baghdad, \$230 million for U.S. allies in the war on terror, and \$200 million in economic and infrastructure assistance to the Palestinian Authority.

The Pentagon has pressured lawmakers to pass the bill quickly, saying it would run out of money for wars by Thursday. But spokesman Lawrence Di Rita said the Pentagon has moved roughly \$1 billion in funds from other accounts to pay for the war in anticipation of congressional delays in getting the new money.

Rep. Doris Matsui, D-Calif., voted present on the measure, which included a provision for a death benefit for the survivors of House members who die in office. As the widow of Rep. Robert T. Matsui, who died Jan. 1, she voted present to avoid a conflict of interest, her office said. Matsui won a special election for her husband's seat in March.

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The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions for style, brevity and clarity.

Take pictures within your units. Look for unique shots that show your unit's mission and E-mail them to:

cjtf76.pao.photos@cjtf76.centcom.mil

In the subject line, type "Photo Contest" and your name.

Submit by end of each month. The winner will be notified by e-mail. Three photos max per month.

Winning photos will run in **The Patriot** and **The Freedom Watch**.

Photographer will also receive a Commanding General coin and a 2-Star note.

Include Name, Rank, Unit, Job Description and hometown of photographer. Also, provide in the caption - the date, location, unit mission and identify any troops.

Photo of the month



2-35 Infantry and 2-25 Aviation conduct slingload operations during Operation Devil's Backbone. (Photo by Capt. Jorn Pung, 65th Engineer Battalion)

Across Afghanistan / CJTF - 76

Coalition Profiles A change of pace

CJTF-76 Public Affairs Release

After two and a half years commanding Cambridge University Officers Training Corps, English Lt. Col. Simon Owen was looking for a new challenge. He was rewarded with a six-month posting to Bagram Airfield, where he is working with U.S. forces as part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"It has been a great opportunity to help rebuild a country shattered by 25 years of conflict," said Owen, who has spent the last three months on Bagram Airfield. "I am hugely impressed by the energy and enthusiasm of the Afghan people, who are determined to build a secure and prosperous country."

Owen is one of the few British soldiers working with

the Americans; he is the Deputy Director of the Civil Military Operations branch of the Headquarters co-coordinating the efforts of 15 Provincial Reconstruction Teams working in 26 of the 34 provinces in Afghanistan. The main efforts of these PRTs are directed towards improving the local security situation and assisting with reconstruction and development. Over the last year, U.S. forces have spent \$150 million on wells, schools, roads, police vehicles and equipment as well as providing training to local police, civil servants and former mujahadeen.



Lt. Col. Simon Owen, poses with Afghan children during a recent patrol.

the poorest countries in the world, there have been huge advances in the last year. Democracy has taken off with successful presidential elections and the Afghans are supporting our efforts with increasing numbers of weapon caches being turned in."

Owen's wife, two daughters and Labrador continue to live in Cambridge during his tour but are looking forward to his mid-tour break.

"The separation is tough but the tangible improvements, which the NATO and U.S. forces are making, make me proud to be here," he said.

"After training students from Cambridge University, the University of East Anglia and Anglia Polytech-

nic University, I wanted to do something completely different," said Owen. "Although Afghanistan is one of

ments, which the NATO and U.S. forces are making, make me proud to be here," he said.

Lost IDs threaten security and personnel

Story by Sgt. Adrian Schulte
CJTF-76 Public Affairs

Operational security is drilled into service members' minds on a regular basis, especially in a combat environment. Besides watching the content of emails sent back home and being careful of what is said on the phone, keeping tabs on security badges and military identifications are some of the most important and easy ways to ensure sensitive information and personnel are secure.

From January to April of this year, over 170 military IDs, including flight-line and Joint Operation Center badges were reported missing on Bagram Airfield alone, according to Capt. Seamus Garret, 13th Military Police company commander.

The majority of those reported stolen are military IDs.

The loss of a military ID can result in administrative action from the troop's chain of command including non-judicial punishment, Garret said.

"The loss of a military ID has a direct impact on force

protection operations at Coalition facilities across the [theater]," said Garret. "Additionally, if a military ID leaves the theater in the hands of terrorist groups, we potentially expose other Department of Defense installations worldwide to attacks."

The majority of larcenies reported to the provost marshal's office involve wallets unsecured in common areas, said Garret.

"Someone who is stealing cash from you will not take the time to open the wallet and remove money; they will simply take it all and dispose of what they don't want later," he said.

Garret has several suggestions to ensure IDs don't get lost.

- Keep your ID on you at all times or secured in a safe place.
- Do not leave IDs unsecured in places like the gym or shower facilities.
- Do not leave your ID with your wallet or personal belongings unsecured or unattached.

Keeping your ID secured, will ensure military information and personnel remain secure not only in Afghanistan, but across the world.

Non-infantry Soldiers to be eligible for combat badge

Story courtesy of
U.S. Army Stand-To!

The new Combat Action Badge (CAB) has been approved by Army leadership, who created the badge to recognize all Soldiers who are in combat with the enemy. The new badge is in keeping with the Warrior Ethos displayed by all Soldiers, regardless of rank or military occupational specialty. The badge recognizes the reality of today's 360 degree battlefield.

The Combat Action Badge design is still pre-decisional. The requirements to be awarded the badge are as follows.

- Be a U.S. Army Soldier.
- Rank, Branch and Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) are immaterial.
- Performing assigned duties in an area where hostile fire pay or imminent danger pay is

authorized.

- Not eligible for award of the Combat Infantry Badge (CIB) or Combat Medical Badge (CMB) at the time of the action cited.

- Personally present and actively engaging or being engaged by the enemy, and performing satisfactorily in accordance with the prescribed rules of engagement.

- Battle or campaign participation credit alone is not sufficient; the Soldier must engage or be engaged by the enemy.

Commanders at the rank of Major General will have award authority.

Although a Close Combat Badge (CCB) was considered as an option, Army leadership decided the CAB best meets the intent of field commanders to fully recognize Soldier actions in combat.

For more information about all the Army's badges, symbols and insignia, visit www.army.mil/symbols.

Regional Command East / Task Force Thunder

69th Trans Soldiers set for new duties

Story by 1st Lt. Kristin Burt
Logistics Task Force 191

FOB SALERNO--Right now, for many Soldiers, home is a corner of a tent somewhere in the mountains of Afghanistan, or the desert of Iraq. But even before deployment, many Soldiers were away from home more than not training. For a truck driver, this is a way of life. The mission of a truck driver in a line-haul unit keeps the Soldier on the road, eyes on the horizon, where the next mission lies in wait. With this constant movement, home for a truck driver can be relative.

The mission of 69th Transportation Company out of Mannheim, Germany, a M915 truck line-haul unit, is repetitive but vital at their home station. The Road Runners of the 69th are responsible for delivering cargo throughout Germany and its bordering countries.

For 1st Lt. Josh Kerton, Platoon Leader, 1st Platoon, accomplishing the mission meant rarely having the members of his platoon in one place at the same time. To maintain command and control, Kerton leaned heavily on his squad leaders. With his Soldiers spread across the country, Kerton worked diligently to ensure that each Soldier stayed safe and received the proper training for their upcoming deployment to Afghanistan.

The leadership challenges that Kerton faced in Germany quickly showed their worth when he was faced with a similar situation after arriving in Afghanistan. Shortly after landing at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Kerton learned that his platoon would once again be spread out across a country. Not only would his Soldiers work at different nodes



Spc. Chanss Carpenter shows Sgt. Daniel Wilson a printout from the Mobile Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System at Forward Operating Base Salerno. (Photo courtesy of Joint Logistics Command.)

across Regional Command East, but the mission they would undertake in Afghanistan would, at first glance, bear no resemblance to their mission in Germany. The Soldiers

and the training hasn't stopped. There's a total focus on squad and team, and it's amazing how they came together. The Soldiers are confident, and we're ready."

It's a sentiment echoed by the Road Runner Soldiers. Sgt. Jason Bernardy is realistic about the demanding convoy training.

"Of course, you never want to have to use it," Bernardy said. "But the Soldiers are really getting into it."

Bernardy doesn't mind trading in his M915 for a 5-ton either.

"I can drive anything," he said.

The 5-ton isn't the only vehicle that's newly mission essential to the Soldiers of the 69th. The Soldiers are also learning how to operate a Tank and Pump Unit.

"We go from generator to generator, on a set route, one to three times a day," said Spc. Thomas Farland. Normally the job of a petroleum supply specialist, the truck drivers are taking on new responsibilities to keep the FOB fueled.

While Farland and his team help refuel the FOB, some Soldiers, like Spc. Chanss Carpenter, are in-

specting all "jingle" trucks that come through its front gate. The vehicle inspection team is licensed on the Mobile Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System. The MVACIS is a truck-mounted, non-intrusive, gamma-ray imaging system that produces radiographic images used to evaluate the threat risk of the local trucks that are allowed onto the FOB.

In laymen's terms, it's a big X-ray machine.

"It really speeds up the vehicle search process," said Carpenter. "Now we only need two Soldiers to physically search the trucks and two more to operate the MVACIS. It goes a lot quicker."

The transporters of the 69th are learning more about multifunctional logistics and supporting warriors. Kerton welcomes the change in mission.

"Here we're working with the war fighters," he said. "It's important."

The importance of being trained for their mission outside the wire is not lost on the Soldiers. Kerton uses this time before his Soldiers are sent to their respective nodes to train.

The question remains: what is home for a truck driver? After seeing the agility with which the Soldiers of the 69th have handled their change in mission, and the numerous new requirements that came with it, the answer is clear. Home is the road. Home is behind the wheel. Home is delivered mail, a topped-off generator, a vehicle search that discovered a potential threat to the FOB, or another squad of troops transported safely to their objective. Whether the company is here in Afghanistan or back in Germany, the truck drivers of the 69th Transportation Company know that home is an accomplished mission.



Soldiers from 69th Transportation Company hone their skills during convoy training. (Photo courtesy of JLC)

that drove M915s and delivered mostly mail would now drive 5-tons to deliver troops outside the wire, as well as conduct vehicle search operations and refuel operations on the FOB.

Staff Sgt. Philip Spears, a 1st Platoon squad leader, is looking forward to attacking the mission.

"This is a great opportunity," he said. "It's a real world mission and the Soldiers are looking forward to it. We've been training a long time

many different characteristics, Hollis said that once it comes down to having boots on the ground, Soldiers and Marines aren't that much different.

"Everyone is here to do a job, and I think deep down inside everyone just wants to go home to Mom," he said. "The same jokes I hear the Marines mess around with, our Soldiers mess around with and I didn't real see a big difference."

DEVILS from Page 1

standard, they've definitely got an excellent organization, he said.

"Everyone in Weapons Company was extremely professional with all our guys, wanted to pass off as much information as they could prior to us transferring authority, and I was really impressed with all the Marines," he said.

Although the Army and the Marine Corps are two distinct services with



Capt. Ken Barr, commander of Weapons Company, 3/3 Marines, points out a terrain feature to Capt. Edward Hollis (left) and 2nd Lt. Kareem Fernandez, A Co., 2/504 April 28.

White Devils explore new mission in Salerno

Regional Command East / Task Force Thunder

TF Sabre gives back

Story and photo by
Capt. (Chaplain) Ronald Beltz
Task Force Griffin

BAGRAM AIRFIELD--A handful of Soldiers from Task Force Sabre distributed humanitarian aid goods to needy Afghan women and children, April 28, at the Egyptian Hospital on Bagram Airfield.

Among the items distributed by the Soldiers were school kits, hygiene kits, clothes and shoes. Also an assortment of toys and candies were given to the children. The humanitarian goods were contributed from a number of different organizations and individuals from the United States.

"This really makes you re-evaluate your priorities in life, in the USA we take so many things for granted," said Chief Warrant Officer Damon Sanger, one of the participants. "It's great to be able to bring some happiness to these women and children that have only known hardship in life."



Cheif Warrant Officers Damon Sanger and James Hogg, along with Spc. Rafael Roett and Sgt. 1st Class Marvin Henley pass out clothing and shoes at the Egyptian Hospital on Bagram.



One of the new fuel bags on Bagram Airfield.

JLC super sizes it!

Story and photo by
Brannon Lamar
*Joint Logistics Command
Public Affairs*

BAGRAM AIRFIELD--The problem? Dozens of privately-owned tanker trucks backed up for days, waiting to load or unload fuel on Bagram.

The solution? Get a bigger bag.

And that's exactly what the Joint Logistics Command has done.

The JLC has more than doubled the amount of fuel storage at a Bagram fuel site with larger capacity bags. This may seem simple, but the challenge was adding twice the storage in the same space...while still providing vital fuel support to aviation units.

"Our Kellog Brown and Root contractors and local workers did a fantastic job," said theater petroleum manager, Sgt. 1st Class Tim Lebouf. "They even called in people from the night shift to make it happen. They were able to drain the old bags, rebuild the berms and install the new ones in about three

days...all without interrupting fuel service to the units."

The biggest benefit is in efficiency. Due to road conditions across Afghanistan, frequent delays in shipping cause bottlenecks at distribution centers. That can lead to drivers sitting in holding areas for days waiting to unload fuel. The new storage areas' increased capacity allows fuel managers to compensate for this accordion effect.

"On Bagram, and at our other sites, space is at a premium," said Lebouf. "The bigger bags allow us to get more of the fuel into storage quicker. And that lets us save time and money by getting the trucks in and out quicker."

With the JLC adding new fuel providers to diversify the supply, the additional space is welcome. Aviation fuel from Uzbekistan and other former Soviet republics is refined to a different level, and must be treated with additives to reach jet fuel standards. This adds one to two days of time to the overall process.

With the new system, the pilots never know the difference.

Transfers Of Authority

Task Force Guardian

Story and Photo by
Spc. Jason Krawczyk
*20th Public Affairs
Detachment*

BAGRAM AIRFIELD—Combined Joint Task Force 76, Task Force Guardian welcomed a new commander May 2.

Col. Katherine Miller replaced Col. George Millan as commander of Task Force Guardian and the Bagram Airfield Provost Marshal. "Guardian's suc-

cess in this volatile operating environment is a tribute to not only the great leadership of Colonel Millan and the commanders and staff under his control, but to each and every Soldier in the task force," said Miller.

After leaving Task Force Guardian Millan will go to the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle Barracks, Pa..

"This has been the most rewarding assignment of my service. I am very proud to have been a member of Task Force Guardian. I stand here in awe of the Soldiers represented



Brig. Gen. Jack Sterling hands colors over to Col. Katherine Miller to symbolize the passing of responsibility of Task Force Guardian.

by today's formation," said Millan. "I want to wish Miller the best during her tour as Guardian 6."

Task Force Sword

CJTF-76 Press Release

BAGRAM AIRFIELD – Soldiers from the 18th Engineer Brigade watched as their unit colors unfurled during a transfer of authority ceremony May 3 that signified the end of mission for Task Force Coyote.

The Heidelberg, Germany-based brigade, commanded by Col. Michael S. Flanagan, will oversee all military engineer operations in Afghanistan as Task Force Sword.

Meanwhile, South



Col. Michael S. Flanagan and Command Sgt. Maj. Rodney S Craddock unfurl the 18th Engineer Brigade colors during a transfer of authority ceremony at Bagram. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Rick Scavetta, CJTF-76 Public Affairs)

Dakota National Guard troops from Task Force Coyote are heading home after a yearlong mission. Among their tasks were mine clearing, base construction and airfield improvements, said Col. Nancy Wetherill, the outgoing commander. One major project was road construction from Kandahar to Tarin Kowt, a 120 kilometer stretch through the heart of Taliban country. The road will restore trade for Afghans, improve security and allow easier access to healthcare and commerce, she said.

Regional Command South / Task Force Bayonet

Duty hails from the depths

Helicopter crews battle terrain to save Soldier's life

Story by Sgt. Tara Teel
CJTF-76 Public Affairs

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD--The mission took place in one of the most extreme valleys in Afghanistan. But the helicopter crew opted to battle the nearly impossible terrain in order to save the life of one U.S. Soldier.

The UH-60 Blackhawk and AH-64 Apache crew were on a routine mission re-supplying Coalition forces in southern Afghanistan when they received word that a Soldier was wounded while in contact with the enemy. They immediately changed course volunteering to medevac the Soldier.

This was neither an ordinary medevac mission nor a medevac

helicopter. There was no marked landing zone. It lacked the simple, negotiable terrain of a routine mission. And there was enemy in the area.

A Blackhawk's rotor disks are approximately 54 feet across from one side to the other. The open, upper portion of the valley is no larger than 270 feet wide, while the bottom where the Soldier laid wounded is at most 108 feet wide. The walls are sheer, rock plunging to a depth of 1,000 feet.

But the pilot, with help from the crew, carefully maneuvered through the extreme valley while operating with less than 54 feet of clearance between the rotors and the sheer rock walls.

There was no place to land the

helicopter. The crew chiefs expertly guided the pilot until he maneuvered into position above the wounded Soldier. The pilot had one wheel on the ground basically hovering during the entire time of the extraction.

The crew had to use a jungle penetrator, a hoist used to extract people from area with dense brush or in tight area where helicopters can't land, to retrieve the wounded Soldier. The device was used extensively in Vietnam.

Keeping watch overhead, the Apache never broke orbit and as a result, the enemy never engaged the exposed helicopter retrieving the wounded Soldier in the valley.

Racing against time to the nearest forward surgical team, the

Blackhawk reached a nearly unheard of 190 knots ground speed en route.

It was through the precise piloting skills of Chief Warrant Officer Gary Farwell and Chief Warrant Officer Dan Rittler and the steadfastness of Spc. Juan Hanniger and Pfc. Eric Mitchell that the mission was a success. The Apache team of 1st Lt. Brian Hummel and Chief Warrant Officer Phillip Learn provided air support in defense of the retrieval team during the mission.

The quick-thinking, skilled actions of six individuals in a tight space saved one Soldier's life.

(Note: Portions of this story are by 1st Lt. Daniel Squyres, HHC/3-158th Avn. Regt., Task Force Storm, Kandahar Airfield)

Afghan Soldiers take lead in Oruzgan

ANA takes fight to the insurgents in the heart of Afghanistan during Operation Nam Dong

Story and photos
courtesy of CJSOTF-A
Public Affairs

ORUZGAN PROVINCE--The Afghan National Army, assisted by U.S. Special Forces advisers, conducted operations on an unprecedented scale recently during Operation Nam Dong in the Oruzgan province in south central Afghanistan.

During a seven day period in April 2005, the 3/1 Kandak (Afghan National Army battalion) of the Afghan National Army and its three maneuver companies conducted presence patrols, search and attack operations, medical/civic action programs (MEDCAPs) and the distribution of humanitarian supplies to villages throughout the province.

The 3/1 Kandak was assisted in the planning and execution of the operation by a Special Forces Operational Detachment "A" (ODA) which was serving in its traditional role as combat advisers. The ODA named

the operation in honor of an historic battle in their team's history.

During the early morning hours of July 6, 1964, this same ODA came under attack at Nam Dong Firebase, Vietnam, by two reinforced Viet Cong battalions. The men of the team fought for five hours before the conflict stopped. Two team members died during that day's battle and were posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. The detachment commander, Capt. Roger Donlon, was awarded the first Medal of Honor of the Vietnam War for his heroic actions on that day.

A 12-man Special Forces ODA is organized, trained and equipped to advise and assist a battalion-sized element in combat. The ODA did just that as they not only trained and patrolled alongside their ANA counterparts, but also trained and assisted the ANA Kandak commander and his staff in such as areas as command and control,



Afghan troops stand ready to move out during Operation Nam Dong.

battle tracking, communications and tactical re-supply operations.

The seven-day operation constituted a significant first in the history of the ANA as they successfully conducted battalion-level operations employing three maneuver companies dispersed over an area covering more than 300 square kilometers. With their tactical operations centers (TOCs) located side-by-side, the U.S. and ANA battle staffs were able to simultaneously track all of the engagements, the maneuver elements on the ground and report their progress to their respective higher headquarters.

The ANA were also supported by a robust package of supporting U.S. assets during Operation Nam Dong. A platoon of 105 mm artillery, attack and lift aviation, a quick reaction element, civil affairs and medical personnel in direct support of all operations. These assets combined to assist the ANA in exerting an overt Afghan presence throughout the northern Oruzgan province and further promoted the Afghan Government to the local populace.

Operations assumed a rapid and active pace from the first day of the operation and remained so until the last elements were extracted

seven days later. Upon establishing their TOC on day one, the ANA Kandak staff conducted a shura meeting with the local mullahs and village elders to explain the purpose of the operation and to promote the Afghan Army as the legitimate government authority in the region.

Meanwhile, the three Afghan maneuver companies and their Special Forces advisers were conducting presence patrols throughout the villages in their respective areas. Later that evening, 105 mm artillery lit up the skies as the 2nd ANA Company engaged an

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An ANA company commander briefs his Soldiers prior to Operation Nam Dong in the Oruzgan province.

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enemy communications position.

Events continued to develop at a rapid pace on day two. While the ANA and U.S. medical support personnel treated over 250 Afghans during a MEDCAP in the village of Saraw, the 2nd ANA Company engaged in small arms contact with enemy forces in their sector. Close air support and quick reaction elements were immediately inserted into the area to assist in hunting down the insurgents.

Day three saw continued presence patrols, a distribution of humanitarian assistance supplies by the ANA, and shura meetings with village elders.

On day four, the ANA hosted another MEDCAP, followed by a women's shura meeting in the village of Saraw. Meanwhile the 2nd ANA Company and their U.S. advisers continued to engage enemy insurgents in their sector with artillery, close air support and direct fire.

The remaining three days of the operation

Operation Nam Dong

consisted of continued combined efforts to provide humanitarian and medical assistance to the local villages while ANA forces pressed deep into known enemy locations to seek out and destroy the insurgent elements.

Operation Nam Dong proved to be a momentous event in the history of the Afghan National Army. For the first time ever, an entire Afghan Army battalion tracked and maneuvered multiple forces on the battlefield while conducting the full spectrum of military and humanitarian operations. The effect on the local populace was immense as the Afghan people saw their own National Army taking the lead in providing them a safe and secure environment.

Equally significant were the effects of the combined U.S./ANA attacks deep into insurgent territory. The combined effects of these forces and their supporting fire assets resulted in numerous enemy casualties and greatly diminished their ability to operate freely in what has traditionally been Taliban sanctuary.



U.S. artillery fires on enemy positions in support of Afghan troops during Operation Nam Dong.



An Afghan Soldier offers a gift to a young child during Operation Nam Dong.



Special Operations personnel brief Afghan Soldiers preparing for Operation Nam Dong.



Afghan Soldiers load a CH-47 Chinook helicopter during Operation Nam Dong.

Regional Command South / Task Force Bayonet

The Rock falls hard on Taliban



By Pfc. Jon H. Arguello
TF Bayonet
Public Affairs

QALAT – Paratroopers from the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry (Airborne) proved they are ready to find, fix and fight the enemy in what is arguably the largest loss to the Taliban and anti-coalition forces since being removed from power.

What started as a seven-man scout team and 14 Afghan National Policemen taking on an unknown number of insurgents, turned into a historic battle raising questions as to whether the Taliban have been dealt a back-breaking blow or have stepped up plans to revive their campaign to disrupt the Afghan government's progress.

Scouts in the Arghandab Valley of the Deh Chopan district, in the Zabul province, had received intelligence reports that insurgent forces happened to be in the same area and began to move towards their suspected location.

"We had been working with local police," said Staff Sgt. Patrick Brannon, scout squad leader. "Some of the information we had received led us to 18,000 DshKa heavy machine gun rounds, so we knew their information was legitimate."

Further intelligence reports placed 80 – 150 Taliban operating in the area.

"We were informed that the Taliban were threatening the people for cooperating with Coalition forces," said Brannon.

"We moved east through a valley," said Spc. Joseph Leatham, describing the movement towards the Taliban position. "We were surrounded by walls – steep cliffs. It was a very uncomfortable feeling."



Scouts from 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne) pose with their interpreter during operations in Deh Chopan. Top row from left to right: Spc. Joseph Leatham, Sgt. Michael Ortiz, 2/503rd translator who goes by "Rock" and Sgt. Nick Pak. Bottom row from left to right: Spc. Nicolas Conlon and Pfc. Nathan Reilly. (Photo courtesy of 2/503d scouts)

Ten minutes into the journey, an Afghan man approached the convoy. The man had been recently released by the Taliban after having been beaten and threatened with execution for cooperation with Coalition forces.

"The guy said he was about to be executed and that there were about 30 Taliban in the area," said Sgt. Nick Pak. "He had a note around his neck threatening the people and demanding that there be no schools."

While explaining what had happened, two Taliban members were spotted and identified by the man. Once confirmed as Taliban, the Afghan National Police opened fire. Almost simultaneously, the convoy began receiving small arms fire from multiple directions.

The scouts received approval to engage the enemy and sent a sniper team to an over-watch position.

"As soon as we got to the top, we got [rocket-propelled grenade] and small arms fire," said Spc. Nicholas Conlon, a scout sniper.

"Pieces of rocks were

breaking off all around us," added sniper team leader Sgt. Derek Huss. "One [RPG] hit real close."

At this point, all the scouts were engaged in a heavy exchange of fire. The scouts attempted to seal off the objective so the enemy could not escape. The fierce exchange was ordered to continue so that reinforcements could trap the Taliban and eliminate them. The outnumbered scouts engaged and reengaged the insurgent forces three times before reinforcement from friendly forces could arrive.

"The enemy was trying to overrun our truck so we broke contact," said Brannon.

As the Scouts tried to maneuver into a better position, one of the humvees took several rocket propelled grenade hits and burst into flames.

The truck's gunner continued to fire his .50 cal machine gun as the humvee was engulfed in flames.

"The truck was on fire but Leatham was still rocking the .50 cal," said Pak.

"The truck started rolling backwards," said

Leatham. "I was still shooting and Sgt. Huss was trying to stop the truck. Sgt. Brannon was providing cover fire so I could get out of the vehicle."

"We were pinned down pretty bad," said Sgt. Michael Ortiz, the assigned medic. "At that point, Chosen Company tried to land but they couldn't."

"I laid down suppressive fire with the Mk-19 so the bird could land," said Pfc. Nathan Reilly, from Greensburg, Pa.

As much as the scouts laid down cover fire the landing zone was taking too much fire for the reinforcements to land. The scouts, who had been engaged in the firefight for more than two and a half hours, watched as the CH-47 Chinook aborted the landing and flew away.

"You can't imagine how scary it is to be in a fire fight like this and after two and a half hours of fighting, to see the support leave," Ortiz said.

However, Chosen Company did land and the battle continued with their reinforcement, only this time

with the "Chosen few" leading the charge.

"The scouts were in contact and at that point we were a QRF," said 1st Lt. Les Craig from Erie, Pa., and platoon leader of 1st Platoon. "We assembled in about 15 minutes and prepared to go where our friends were – where our enemies were."

The helicopter landed and 1st Platoon's "Bullies" poured from the Chinook ready to relieve the embattled scouts.

"We got reports that the landing zone was hot while we were in the air," said Craig. "The other friendly forces that had landed were already in contact."

Although 1st Platoon didn't receive any immediate fire, suspicious activity was all around.

"I was trying to get a feel of where our Soldiers were," said Craig.

"We knew there were bad guys but we didn't know where they were," said Sgt. 1st Class David Cavataio, the Bullies' platoon leader.

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Keeping an eye out for trouble

Soldiers from Battle Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment keep watch during a recent cordon search operation. (Photo by Pfc. Jon Arguello, TF Bayonet Public Affairs)

Scouts and Chosen Company battle insurgents

ROCK from Page 9

toon sergeant. "We set up security and started pushing up."

Soon after setting up an over watch position, insurgent forces were spotted.

"When we got clearance and confirmation that they had weapons, we opened fire, but they opened up on us at the same time and the exchange started," Cavataio said.

The plan was to systematically clear one of the nearby villages of danger, explained Craig.

"From the south part of the town, we began clearing the village from east to west," said Craig. "There were high walls and locked doors everywhere."

The Taliban had sealed the village to make it difficult for Coalition Forces to clear by barricading and locking all doors and gates. The platoon had to make use of sappers to get through the mud hut maze.

The platoon, left with little choice, bypassed clearing the hamlet and pushed through to the edge of the village into an orchard.

Craig's Soldiers received a volley of rocket propelled grenades wounding Pfc. Mathew King.

"The round didn't explode," said Craig. "The fins cut into his leg and the round landed ten to fifteen feet in

front of me and the radio operator."

Craig and his men continued to move forward through withering machine gun fire seeking cover behind trees and rocks.

"I thought, 'the only way we will get through this is if we push forward,'" said Craig. "It was raining branches in the orchard. My RTO tried to move forward and when he got up, a tree basically fell on him."

The paratroopers were pinned down until a machine gunner put down enough suppressive fire for the Soldiers to move forward towards the enemy.

"Specialist Lewis fired a 200 round burst and that bought us a couple of seconds to bum rush the objective," Craig said. "We approached the enemy but we thought all the guys were already engaged because no one was responding."

The element closed in on the enemy undetected moving parallel to a sunken creek with steep rocky slopes.

As the team moved past the bunker to make a limit of advance, Capt. Dirk Riggerberg, Chosen Company's commander, moved into Choay's old position between the wall and the bunker. Chosen's commander received fire from a well-concealed position along the creek wall.

An alert squad automatic weapon gunner moved to into position and ended the fight.

By the end of the battle, more than 17 enemy combatants had been confirmed killed by Chosen Company, nine captured and another 25 possibly killed by Chosen and 2-503rd scouts.

"I expected there to be stiff resistance but not as severe as this," said Riggerberg.

Chosen Company's first sergeant wasn't surprised by the enemies' dedication.

"They've been fighting

for so many years," said 1st Sgt. Scott Brzak. "They have nothing to lose and everything to gain."

The effect the battle has had on his Soldiers is a positive one, said Brzak.

"The Soldiers now know that they can depend on and trust the buddy to the left and right of them," Brzak said. "They know their buddy will lay down their life for them. They also now know how the enemy operates and can pass this experience on to the rest of the company and the battalion."

Many questions have

been raised as to the significance of the battle. The ferocity with which the insurgent fighters defended their position is atypical of the hit and run and improvised explosive device tactics the Taliban has been using since being removed from power.

"This is going to force them to rethink their strategy," Riggerberg said. "I think our tactics will force them to fight and die or surrender. I think we put them on their heels. They now know that the American Army still has the energy to hunt them down."



Lt.Col. Michael Shinnors, 173rd Airborne Brigade deputy commander presents Staff Sgt. Matthew Blaskowski with a purple heart at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany for wounds received during a firefight with Taliban insurgents. (Photo courtesy of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Rear Detachment)

What's Happening / News You Can Use

Senate OKs pay for Guard and Reserve

The Senate has agreed to make sure that federal employees serving in the National Guard and Reserve don't lose pay when they are activated.

The measure was added to a emergency spending bill to fund the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and other costs. The amendment was approved in a voice vote after an attempt to derail it failed.

Its prospects of becoming law are uncertain, however. The Senate bill will have to be reconciled with a \$81.4 billion version of the bill the House approved last month.

About 120,000 government employees serve in the Guard or Reserve and, when activated, lose an average of \$368 a month, the difference between their civilian and military pay. Pay issues are a main reason members don't re-enlist.

Submit your unit's story to The Patriot

Tell the whole CJOA what your unit is doing.

The Patriot is always on the lookout for amateur journalists and photographers who have a story to tell.

Send your stories to schultea@cjtf76.centcom.mil.

Stand alone photos are also welcome.

Remember when submitting stories and photos to remember the 5 W's of journalism: who, what, where, when and why.

Also include full names, rank and units of troops involved and of the author.

Stories will be edited for content and to meet journalistic standards.

New health plan for National Guard / Reserve

TRICARE Reserve Select is for Reserve Component members who separate from qualifying active duty service on or after April 27, 2005.

Beginning April 26, 2005, certain members and former members of the National Guard and Reserve will be able to purchase premium-based health care coverage under a new TRICARE health plan called TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) for themselves and their family members.

TRS eligibility is established with the member's Service/Reserve Component personnel offices. RC members may be eligible to purchase TRS for themselves and their immediate family members if they meet certain conditions.

To find out if you are eligible for Reserve Select, go to www.military.com. To apply for TRS online or download the necessary forms, go to www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/esgr/index.jsp

CJTF-76 Sunday Religious Services

Bagram Airfield's Enduring Faith Chapel

- 0400Z Liturgical Protestant Worship
- 0530Z Roman Catholic Mass
- 0700Z Protestant Worship
- 0830Z Latter Day Saints Worship
- 1115Z Korean Worship Service
- 1300Z Gospel Service

Kandahar Airfield's Fraise Chapel (Formerly Freedom Chapel)

- 0330Z Protestant Worship Service
- 0500Z Roman Catholic Mass
- 0600Z Protestant Worship Service (SF Compound Chapel)
- 0600Z Orthodox Worship Service (Romanian Orthodox Chapel)
- 0630Z Protestant Worship Service
- 0830Z Latter Day Saints Services
- 1430Z Gospel Worship Service

Forward Operating Base Salerno

- 0400Z Protestant Worship Service
- 0530Z Divine Liturgy of the Eucharist
- 0700Z Latter Day Saints Service
- 0830Z Gospel Worship

Forward Operatina Base Orgun-E

- 0630Z and 1600Z Protestant Worship Service
- 0800Z and 1500Z Roman Catholic Mass

War trophies are a No-Go on the homefront

USCENTCOM General Order 1A and COMCJTF-7 FRAGO 160M prohibit soldiers and civilians deployed in support of operations in the USCENTCOM area of responsibility from possessing or transporting items that may pose a risk to safety or health. Prohibited items include, but are not limited to—

Firearms and components, whether operational or nonoperational, antique, or demilitarized (including triggers, stocks, barrels, and other parts); knives; shell casings; primers; munitions; rockets; and rocket components.

Military equipment not designed to be carried by individuals.

Former regime or privately owned household articles, such as linen, silverware, chinaware, rugs, fixtures, and appliances.

Objects with artistic, scientific, archeological, religious, national, or historic value.

Any article retained for commercial or resale purposes.

Sand, dirt, rocks, stone, and gravel.

Plants (including dried plants and seeds) and live, dead, or preserved animals or animal parts (including but not limited to insects, spiders, fish, mammals, reptiles, and birds).

Unit legal advisors and staff judge advocates can provide more information on items that may or may not be transported.



Land Combat Expo Art Contest!

\$10,000 in prize money!

Entry forms and details at the USAREUR website:

<http://www.hqusareur.army.mil>

Prizes in four categories:

Soldiers/Civilians/Family Members/Retirees

1st Place = \$1,000

2nd Place = \$750

Deadline: June 3rd

3rd Place = \$500

Best of Show worth another \$1,000